

# A PEOPLE'S HISTORY



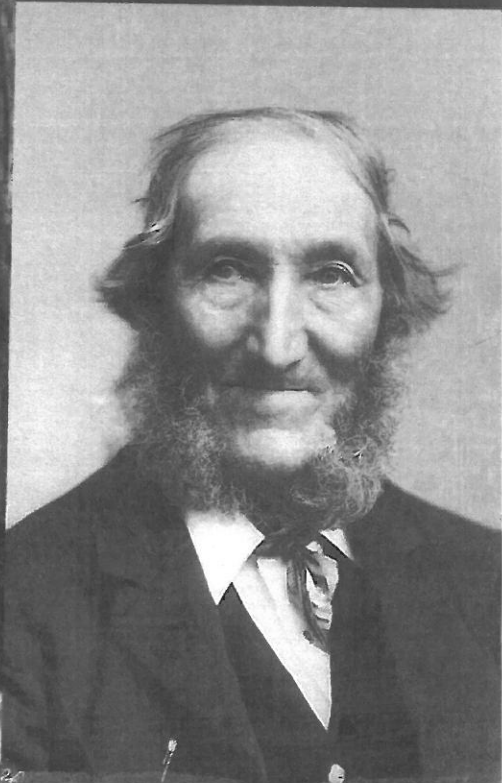
*Illustrated Biographies*

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## *Carl Sylvius Völkner*

1819-1865

MISSIONARY

Carl Sylvius Völkner was born in Kassel, Hesse, Germany, probably in 1819; his parents' names are not known. Trained at the missionary college at Hamburg, Völkner was one of several missionaries sent to New Zealand by the North German Missionary Society. He arrived in New Zealand in August 1849 and worked initially with fellow German Protestant missionary Johann Riemenschneider, in Taranaki. In 1852 he offered his services to the Church Missionary Society. For several years he worked as a lay teacher in lower Waikato. He married Emma Lanfear probably in 1854, and in 1857 was naturalised. He was ordained deacon in 1860 and priest in 1861.

Völkner took charge of the CMS mission station at Opotiki in August 1861. There he worked among Te Whakatohea, who built a church and a school for him. Völkner's significance lies not so much in his life as a missionary, however, but in his death, at the hands of members of his own congregation, on 2 March 1865.

Despite the outbreak of wars in Taranaki and Waikato, Te Whakatohea had remained peaceful. However, by 1864 they were caught up in the debate over whether the East Coast tribes should give support to the Waikato and Tauranga people. Attempts by the East Coast tribes, including Te Whakatohea, to travel to Waikato via Rotorua early in 1864 were resisted by Te Arawa. When they tried to move westward along the coast, they were repulsed by British troops stationed at Maketu and by naval gunfire, sustaining a large number of casualties. Tohi Te Ururangi, a Te Arawa chief, died of wounds received in the battle at Te Kaokaoroa, near Matata. During his tangi, Te Whakatohea chief Te Aporotanga, who had been taken prisoner by Te Arawa, was shot by Tohi's widow, an act which exacerbated the strained relations between the two tribes.

Te Whakatohea were left vulnerable by the combined effects of the battle at Te Kaokaoroa, the loss of Te Aporotanga's leadership, disruption to food cultivation caused by war, and a typhoid and measles epidemic which killed a quarter of the Opotiki population in late 1864. In mid February 1865 a party of Pai Marire emissaries, led by Kereopa Te Rau and Patara Raukatauri, arrived at Opotiki to carry the teachings of the prophet Te Ua Haumene to the East Coast. Their arrival soon aggravated existing divisions among Te Whakatohea.

Despite hostilities Völkner had remained at Opotiki, making several visits to Auckland in 1864, and again in January 1865. Ignoring warnings from several members of Te Whakatohea, he returned to Opotiki in February with fellow missionary Thomas Grace. Arriving on the *Eclipse* on 1 March, they learned that Völkner's house had been plundered, and were taken prisoner. The next morning Völkner was led to a willow tree some 200 yards from his church. There, wrote Grace, 'He then knelt down and prayed, and, having shaken hands with his murderers said "I am ready", and, while they continued to shake hands with him, they hoisted him up.' Völkner's body was taken down after an hour and decapitated, and the blood tasted, or smeared on their faces, by the many people present. Kereopa forced out the eyes and swallowed them, describing one eye as Parliament and the other as the Queen and English



*Carl Sylvius Völkner.*  
*Lithograph from a*  
*photograph by John Kinder.*  
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law. This act of indignity to the head of an enemy conferred mana on Kereopa, and earned for him the name Kaiwhatu (the Eye-eater).

In a trial the following day three charges were laid against Völkner: 'His going to Auckland as a spy for the Government'; that 'A cross had been found in his house, and therefore he was a Romanist and a deceiver'; and that he had returned to Opotiki despite instructions to stay away. The evidence that Völkner acted as a spy is well documented in letters he sent to Governor



George Grey in January and February 1864. Völkner was aware of the risk he was taking, asking Grey not to publicise the source of the information. A further contributing factor to Völkner's unpopularity at this time was the recall, at Grey's insistence, of the popular Catholic missionary Joseph Marie Garavel, after Völkner had accused Garavel of carrying messages to Opotiki from 'hostile' Waikato Maori. Garavel had also accused Völkner of being a spy. Te Whakatohea saw Völkner as one whom they had adopted into their tribe, but who had betrayed them to the Pakeha governor, and for this reason he was executed.

That it was Pokeno, the son of Te Aporotanga, who 'put the rope round Mr. Völkner's neck', also suggests that Te Whakatohea sought punishment, in the public execution of Völkner, for the murder of Te Aporotanga by Te Arawa. Völkner had commented in his 1864 annual report that Te Whakatohea blamed Grey for not having punished Te Arawa, a pro-government tribe, for this act.

The symbolic action of Kereopa, a member of Ngati Rangiwewehi of Te Arawa, must be separated from the concerns of Te Whakatohea. A number of motives have been attributed to him, including a hatred of missionaries and the Pakeha governor and law, revenge for the killing of women and children by British troops at Rangiaowhia in February 1864, and traditional enmity between Te Arawa and Te Whakatohea. Grace commented that 'the people appeared . . . so worked up by their new religion as to be ready for any work of the devil'; but he also observed that Patara, the second Pai Marire emissary at Opotiki, was neither present at Völkner's death nor defended it at the trial. The irony is that Pai Marire, meaning good and peaceful, was essentially pacifist and millennial in its teachings. The prophet Te Ua did not give instructions to his emissaries to kill missionaries. The arrival of Patara, Kereopa and their party was a catalyst that led to the tragedy.

In response to Völkner's death, military expeditions were sent to Opotiki in search of his killers, who were regularly described as 'fanatics'. A number of local people were arrested, and some executed. A large area of land, from Matara to east of Opotiki, was confiscated from eastern Bay of Plenty tribes. Lurid accounts, based only partly on evidence, appeared in contemporary newspapers and inflamed Pakeha attitudes towards the 'rebels'. Völkner's body was buried at his church, which was later reconsecrated and dedicated to St Stephen the Martyr.

Whether his death is interpreted as Christian martyrdom or execution as a spy, the issues are more complex. Völkner was described by William Fox as 'a man of remarkable simplicity of character, of the most single-minded and devoted piety, and an extremely conciliatory and kind disposition.' He was known as a 'pro-government' missionary, who tried to maintain the loyalty of his people to the government. It is possible that, as a naturalised subject, he felt a need to demonstrate his own loyalty by providing information to Grey. He may simply have been politically naïve. He 'frequently expressed his confidence in the Opotiki Maoris' on his last voyage to Opotiki in February 1865. Perhaps his simple-minded piety clouded his perceptions. The consequences of Völkner's death, in military action, bloodshed, and land confiscation, created continuing bitterness and division among the tribes of the eastern Bay of Plenty.

EVELYN STOKES

*Mokomoko*

?-1866

TE WHAKATOHEA LEADER

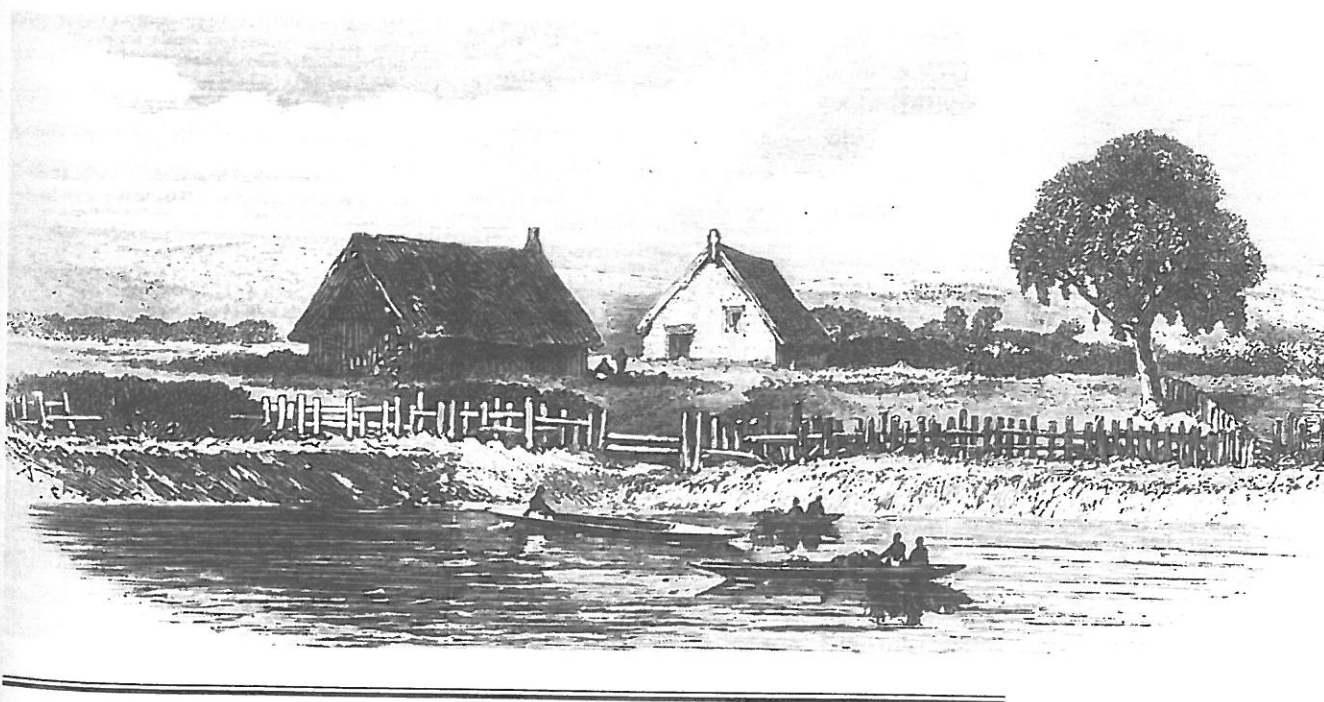
'Tangohia mai te taura i taku kaki kia waiata au i taku waiata.' (Take the rope from my throat that I may sing my song.) These words were spoken by Mokomoko, a chief of Te Whakatohea of the eastern Bay of Plenty, as he was about to be hanged at Mount Eden gaol on 17 May 1866. The charge against Mokomoko was that he took part in the execution of the Reverend Carl Sylvius Völkner at Opotiki on 2 March 1865. For their part, the charge that had been levelled by Te Whakatohea against the missionary was that he was spying, informing the government of their deliberations about coming to the assistance of Waikato in their fight against the Pakeha. He had also failed to condemn the killing of Te Aporotanga, as Te Whakatohea expected.

On 28 April 1864 Te Whakatohea, in concert with some Ngati Porou and other East Coast tribes, had tried to join Waikato, and were repulsed by Te Arawa at the battle of Te Kaokaoroa, near Matata. In the fighting, Te Aporotanga of Te Whakatohea, a high chief of note, was captured and later executed by Ngapi, the widow of Tohi Te Ururangi. Among Te Whakatohea and other Mataatua tribes his death was considered murder. It caused much resentment against Te Arawa and the government; a scathing waiata, condemning Te Arawa for killing Te Aporotanga, was sung by those tribes in opposition to the government.

The events which led up to the killing of Völkner on 2 March 1865 began when the Pai Marire prophet Te Ua Haumene sent Kereopa Te Rau and Patara Raukauri to the East Coast as missionaries. They were instructed to proceed peacefully in preaching the new faith. Kereopa, however, disregarded this instruction. At Whakatane he demanded that Ngati Awa hand over to him a Catholic priest. They did not do so and after banning shipping from using the harbour the Pai Marire party left for Opotiki. Mokomoko accompanied them on the journey from Whakatane to Opotiki. The Pai Marire leaders

*Scene of the killing of the Reverend C. S. Völkner, at Opotiki. Mokomoko was convicted and executed on the charge of taking part in Völkner's hanging. Engraving from the Illustrated London News, 1865.*

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are reported to have said that when they got to Opotiki they would order Völkner to leave and that if he refused they would kill him. About 800 Maori gathered at Opotiki. Ignoring warnings from Te Whakatohea to stay away, Völkner arrived on the schooner *Eclipse* from Auckland on 1 March. He was taken from the ship and imprisoned until his fate was decided. He was then taken to a tree and hanged. Mokomoko denied responsibility for the killing. He claimed that he went away after the decision was made to kill Völkner and was not present at the death. His descendants claim that earlier he had tried to help Völkner escape.

Mokomoko surrendered in October 1865 and was tried in Auckland on 27 March 1866. The evidence against him was the testimony of three witnesses. Joseph Jeans (or Jennings) said Mokomoko had been in the procession that took Völkner to execution and that he had carried the rope. Wiremu Te Paki also said that Mokomoko was with the procession. Wepiha Te Poono said Mokomoko commanded the armed party that took Völkner to be executed. However, witnesses differed in other details. According to one, Mokomoko was carrying the rope behind the armed men leading Völkner to the tree. Other evidence indicated that he was some distance away. No witness claimed that Mokomoko was one of those most involved in the killing. There was a conflict of evidence over who placed the rope around Völkner's neck; Jeans said it was Wi Hura while other witnesses named Pokeno Te Awanui. Neither of these men was brought to trial.

According to Te Whakatohea the rope had belonged to Mokomoko and was taken from him as he was catching his horse. He played no part in Völkner's death but found himself an accessory to the act through ownership of the rope. Subsequently the word *taura* (rope) entered the vocabulary of his people as a symbol of retributive justice. 'Take the rope from my throat' became the murmured prelude to a waiata, sung by Mokomoko, and later Te Whakatohea and neighbouring tribes.

Serious consequences for Te Whakatohea followed the killing of Völkner. The government mounted a punitive expedition in which many people were killed defending their lands and homes. Dwellings and granaries were destroyed and shipping, Te Whakatohea's means of commerce, was burnt at the moorings. In addition, the tribe's arable land, the basis of an effective economy, was confiscated. The years that followed were to be years of subservience to the new masters of the land, decline in tribal numbers and general penury.

Mokomoko had three wives. Two of his wives and six children survived him. After his death he became an effective symbol in the struggle of Te Whakatohea to address the wrongs inflicted on the tribe. To perpetuate the circumstances of Mokomoko's story his descendants were given the following names: Puriri, after the tree on which Völkner was hanged; Ripeka, the cross, symbolising sacrifice; Mautini, a transliteration for Mount Eden gaol; and Tauati, to choke by hanging.

The song of Mokomoko ceased to be sung in the 1940s when government admitted that Te Whakatohea had suffered more than they deserved and were compensated for excessive confiscation of land. While this was an important event for Te Whakatohea the memory of Mokomoko's dying words remains. 'E mate hara kore ana ahau. Tena koutou Pakeha. Hei aha.' (I die an innocent man. Farewell Pakeha. So be it.)

His words at the scaffold, and his song, are also remembered: 'Tangohia mai te taura i taku kaki kia waiata au i taku waiata.' (Take the rope from my neck that I may sing my song.):

Violent shaking will not rouse me from my sleep  
They treat me like a common thief  
It is true that I embrace eternal sleep  
For that is the lot of a man condemned to die.

Shielded from the harsh light  
With narrow eyes I reflect on the retribution taken at Hamukete  
Remember how I was taken on board ship (chained)  
The memory of it burns me with shame.

Bring me justice from distant lands to break my shackles  
Where the sun sets is a government in Europe  
It is for them to say that I must hang  
Then shut me in my coffin box.

In 1981 Te Whakatohea pursued the matter of a government pardon for Mokomoko; Ngati Awa also made a request for all those imprisoned in 1865. In 1987 Mokomoko's family requested permission to exhume his remains from Mount Eden gaol. These requests were granted in 1988. *TAIRONGO AMOAMO*

## Henry Monson

1793-1866

GAOLER

Henry Monson was born at Cawood, Yorkshire, England, on 25 August 1793, the son of Ann Monson and her husband, Bernard Monson, a labourer. He married Ann Kidall of Swaffham, Norfolk, at St Pancras Old Church, London, on 3 November 1825 and set up as a builder in George Street, London; there were five children of the marriage.

Monson's business collapsed in the crisis of 1847. Although too old to meet the criteria for assistance from the Otago Association, he enlisted the good offices of his neighbour, the mathematician Charles Babbage, and was granted passage to Otago on the *John Wickliffe* in 1848 with his two eldest sons, William Henry and John Robert Monson. Ann Monson remained in London to settle their business affairs, and although she was expected to join him in 1856, for unknown reasons she never arrived. The third son, Frederick Kidall Monson, emigrated in 1858.

A keen Methodist, with a social conscience and some experience of ragged schools, Monson helped to set up a school during the voyage out. The carpentry skills of the three Monsons were initially in demand, but hard times followed, as most of the settlers knocked together cottages for themselves. In January 1850 Monson's own house burned down with all its contents, including books from Babbage awaiting delivery to Governor George Grey. Destitute, Monson reminded Grey of Babbage's personal recommendation; the resident magistrate, A. R. C. Strode, was instructed to appoint him as gaoler.

Monson held this post from 1 September 1851 until 15 November 1861.



Henry Monson.  
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Te Keepa and his people at Te Wairoa provided guides and water transport, and performed haka for tourists visiting the pink and white terraces. They received fees for their services. The sum of £5 was charged for any drawing or photograph of the terraces, with the result that no important paintings had been attempted before Charles Blomfield proposed to make a series of paintings in 1884. A meeting of local Maori leaders was called, at which it was decided that Blomfield should pay a lump sum and bring his own boat. Tourism was a prosperous business: however it came to an abrupt end with the eruption of Mt Tarawera on 10 June 1886. The settlement of Te Wairoa was destroyed and nearly half its population of 250 were killed. People took refuge in Te Keepa's house until he advised them to leave, because it was becoming increasingly unsafe. The survivors fled to Ohinemutu, where Ngati Whakauae made Tama-te-kapua meeting house available to them. Te Keepa remained at Te Wairoa until all known Tuhourangi survivors had finally reached safety. The tohunga Tuhoto, who had been buried alive, was not discovered until 14 June.

After the eruption Te Keepa worked to recover bodies for burial and to salvage what property remained. He argued with the government agent at Rotorua, H. D. Johnson, for more than the meagre relief offered to the survivors. Tuhourangi were now refugees and resettlement was an urgent need. The government considered offering land for resettlement in return for the cession of the Rotomahana area. Land in Coromandel or the Chatham Islands was mooted, but this proposal lapsed when Te Keepa became ill before agreement was reached, and meanwhile other Maori made offers of land. Most Tuhourangi people settled at Whakarewarewa and nearby Ngapuna, with their near relatives of Ngati Wahiao. One group was resettled at Thames on land donated by Ngati Maru.

In 1896 Te Keepa was elected to Te Kotahitanga (the Maori parliament), and attended its meeting at Tokaanu in March. In 1901 he took part in the reception at Rotorua for the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and of York. He died on 27 June 1905, and was buried at Whakarewarewa with military honours. A month later his grave was marked by a red granite monument surmounted by a Celtic cross.

STEVEN OLIVER

## *Kereopa Te Rau*

?-1872

NGATI RANGIWEWEHI WARRIOR, PAI MARIRE LEADER

Kereopa Te Rau was one of the five original disciples of Te Ua Haumene, the founder of the Pai Marire faith. He was a member of Ngati Rangiwewehi of Te Arawa. The date and place of his birth are not known, nor the names of his parents. Some time in the 1840s he was baptised by the Catholic missionary Father Euloge Reignier, and took the name Kereopa (Cleophas). He is believed to have served as a policeman in Auckland in the 1850s. In the early 1860s he fought in the King's forces in Waikato. His wife and two daughters are thought to have been killed at Rangiaowhia, near Te Awamutu, when it was attacked by government forces on 21 February 1864, and the following day he was at Hairini, a defensive position just west of Rangiaowhia, where he



saw his sister killed.

After the defeat of the King movement forces in mid 1864, Kereopa joined the new religion of Te Ua Haumene. In December 1864 Te Ua instructed Kereopa and Patara Raukatauri to go as emissaries to the tribes of the East Coast. They were told to preach the Pai Marire faith in the districts they passed through, to go in peace and not to interfere with Pakeha. Kereopa, however, demanded that a European be given up to him at Otipa, a settlement on the lower Rangitaiki River, and that a Catholic priest be handed over at Whakatane. These requests were refused, but at Opotiki the missionary C. S. Völkner was seized and ritually killed on 2 March 1865. Völkner was hanged from a willow tree near his church by members of his own congregation, Te Whakatohea. His body was then decapitated and Kereopa swallowed the eyes, calling one Parliament and the other the Queen and British law. Although this act outraged Europeans, such an indignity to the head of an enemy conferred mana on Kereopa.

Kereopa was widely believed to have instigated the killing of Völkner. Although he had agreed to it, in fact he did not take part in the actual hanging, and cannot be held responsible. The arrival of the Pai Marire party at Opotiki precipitated the tragedy, but there were complex reasons for Völkner's death. Principal among these was Te Whakatohea's anger at the missionary for his actions in spying for the government; in returning to Opotiki at that time Völkner had disregarded the explicit warnings of Te Whakatohea. Kereopa himself may also have sought to avenge the deaths of members of his family at Hairini and at Rangiaowhia, a plan of which Völkner had sent to Governor George Grey.

After the killing of Völkner, Kereopa, with his party of Pai Marire followers, went on to Gisborne, and to the Urewera where he preached the Pai Marire faith among Tuhoe. In May 1865 he attempted to travel to Waikato to preach to the Kingite tribes, but was prevented from reaching the Kaingaroa plains by a force of Ngati Manawa and Ngati Rangitihi. According to one account, in the course of this battle, in which Kereopa's party was supported by Tuhoe, Kereopa swallowed the eyes of three Ngati Manawa warriors who had been killed and decapitated; it was this repetition of his symbolic act at Opotiki which earned him the name Kaiwhatu (the Eye-eater). After a long siege Ngati Manawa and Ngati Rangitihi abandoned their defences at Te Tapiri and Okupu, in the western Urewera, but Kereopa was forced to turn back when a relief party of Te Arawa, led by W. G. Mair, arrived. He then returned to Opotiki but was driven from there by government troops, and fled into the Urewera.

Kereopa had much mana in the eyes of Tuhoe, as the bearer of the Pai Marire faith to that tribe, and thus obtained their protection. The Urewera mountains also offered him protection from his pursuers, as it later would for Te Kooti. Martial law had been declared in the Opotiki and Whakatane districts after the killing of Völkner, and a reward was offered for the capture of those responsible. Kereopa concealed himself at Te Roau, on a densely wooded hillside, Te Miromiro, at Ohaua-te-rangi, a Ngati Rongo settlement north of Ruatahuna. Te Roau had never been occupied, and commanded an excellent view of anyone approaching. There Kereopa was able to elude his pursuers for the next five years.

From mid 1868 the Ringatu faith of Te Kooti gained popularity among



*Kereopa Te Rau, photographed by Samuel Carnell on 8 December 1871, after his capture. The greasepaint Carnell customarily used to accent the moko of his Maori sitters can be seen clearly in this photograph.*

S. CARNELL COLLECTION,  
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Tuhoe, and the influence of Pai Marire correspondingly faded. The reverence in which Tuhoe held Kereopa also diminished, but Tuhoe did not disclose his whereabouts. Over the next three years, however, the people of the Urewera were weakened, and their land devastated, by the government's relentless pursuit of Te Kooti and the remaining Hauhau leaders. Government troops, including a Ngati Porou contingent led by Rapata Wahawaha, embarked on several campaigns between May 1869 and early 1872, in which Tuhoe pa were plundered, crops destroyed and many people killed.

By late 1870 several Tuhoe leaders had made their peace with the government. But they would not violate the sanctuary of the Urewera by giving up Kereopa. Eventually, however, realising that their survival was threatened by Kereopa, they decided to withdraw their protection.

Tuhoe tradition gives the following account of the capture of Kereopa. It was agreed among Tuhoe that neither European soldiers nor Ngati Porou forces should be allowed to capture the Hauhau leader; as his protectors, they would deliver him themselves to the government, to ensure that their own



mana was retained. Thus a Tuhoe party went to Te Roau, in September 1871, and laid their plans before him. Kereopa agreed to give himself as payment for the Tuhoe blood that had been shed for him. When he went to gather his possessions from his sleeping house, however, he attempted to flee. He was chased and captured by a warrior named Te Whiu Maraki, and taken to Ruatahuna. Because he had broken his word, he was handed over as a prisoner to Rapata and Captain Thomas Porter.

On 21 December 1871 Kereopa stood trial at the Supreme Court at Napier for the murder of Völkner. There was no direct proof of his responsibility for the killing, but a European witness, Samuel Levy, testified that he had seen Kereopa among those who escorted Völkner to the willow tree. On the basis of this evidence Kereopa was convicted of murder and sentenced to death. William Colenso appealed unsuccessfully for clemency on the grounds that the crime had already been punished by executions and land confiscation. Mother Mary Aubert, of Father Reignier's mission at Napier, stayed with Kereopa during his last night. He was hanged on 5 January 1872 at Napier.

STEVEN OLIVER

## *Tamihana Te Rauparaha*

?-1876

NGATI TOA LEADER, EVANGELIST, WRITER, SHEEPFARMER, ASSESSOR

Tamihana Te Rauparaha, known also as Katu, was the son of the great Ngati Toa leader Te Rauparaha and his fifth and senior wife, Te Akau of Tuhourangi. He was born at Pukearuhe, a Ngati Tama pa in northern Taranaki, while Ngati Toa were on their long journey from Kawhia to the south. He took the name Tamihana (Thompson) when he was baptised by CMS missionary Octavius Hadfield on 21 March 1841, and was known from that time on as Tamihana. On 11 September 1843 he and Ruta (Ruth) Te Kapu, daughter of Tawhiri of Ngati Raukawa, were married at Otaki by Hadfield.

Katu was carried as a baby to Kapiti, the island which became the new home of Ngati Toa. As a child he accompanied his father on war expeditions. On one occasion, while making cartridges, he injured himself and others by throwing gunpowder into a campfire. Katu was at the storming of Kaiapoi pa in 1831 and was with his father when they were ambushed by Ngai Tahu at Kapara-te-hau (Lake Grassmere), about 1833. Tamihana subsequently wrote down accounts of these and other Ngati Toa campaigns, putting together information he had gathered from Te Rauparaha. These writings have been used extensively by historians.

Christianity was brought to Kapiti, and also to Otaki where Katu was living, by Maori who had been taken as captives to the Bay of Islands and released when their masters became Christian. In November 1839 he and his cousin Matene Te Whiwhi went by ship to the Bay of Islands to seek a missionary for the Kapiti area. They returned with Henry Williams and Octavius Hadfield; Hadfield remained permanently on the Kapiti coast. In 1843 Tamihana and Te Whiwhi went to the South Island and preached Christianity to their relations there and to Ngai Tahu, their former enemies. When he was